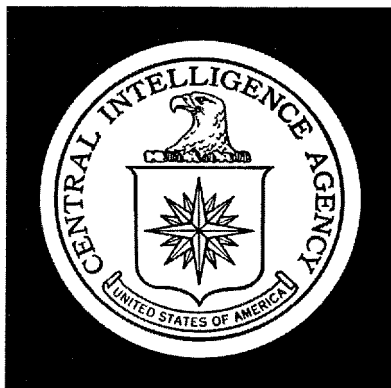


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DIRECTORATE OF  
INTELLIGENCE

## MEMORANDUM

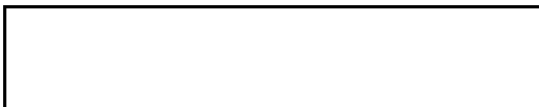
### *The Situation in Vietnam*

State Department review completed

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Information as of 1600  
30 April 1967

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### HIGHLIGHTS

Scattered small unit encounters between allied and Communist forces occurred throughout South Vietnam during the weekend. In the air war in the North, Communist air defenses brought down seven US planes.

I. The Military Situation in South Vietnam:  
Military activity was light throughout the country over the weekend (Para. 1). US Marines began a new operation named BEAVER CAGE north of Chu Lai (Para. 2). Nearly 60 enemy troops were killed in a five-hour battle with South Vietnamese forces east of Hue on 28 April (Para. 3). Two US field positions were hit by enemy mortar--a marine artillery position near Hue and an army base camp in Binh Duong Province (Para. 4-5). Enemy plans to attack targets in and around Saigon have reportedly been revealed (Paras. 6-7). Coordinated attacks by battalion-size Communist units are planned against military targets in and near Pleiku city [REDACTED]

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II. Political Developments in South Vietnam:  
The draft presidential election law before the Constituent Assembly provides for the election of a president by simple plurality and for an election date other than 1 September as set by the government (Paras. 1-3). A fifth civilian has entered the presidential contest (Para. 4). Retired general Tran Van Don is reportedly relinquishing the presidency of a southern political grouping (Para. 5). Militant labor elements now plan a rally rather than a parade in Saigon on 1 May, but some expected participants are reportedly preparing to inject anti-American overtones (Para. 6).

III. Military Developments in North Vietnam:  
Seven US aircraft lost over North Vietnam this weekend (Paras. 1-3). [REDACTED]

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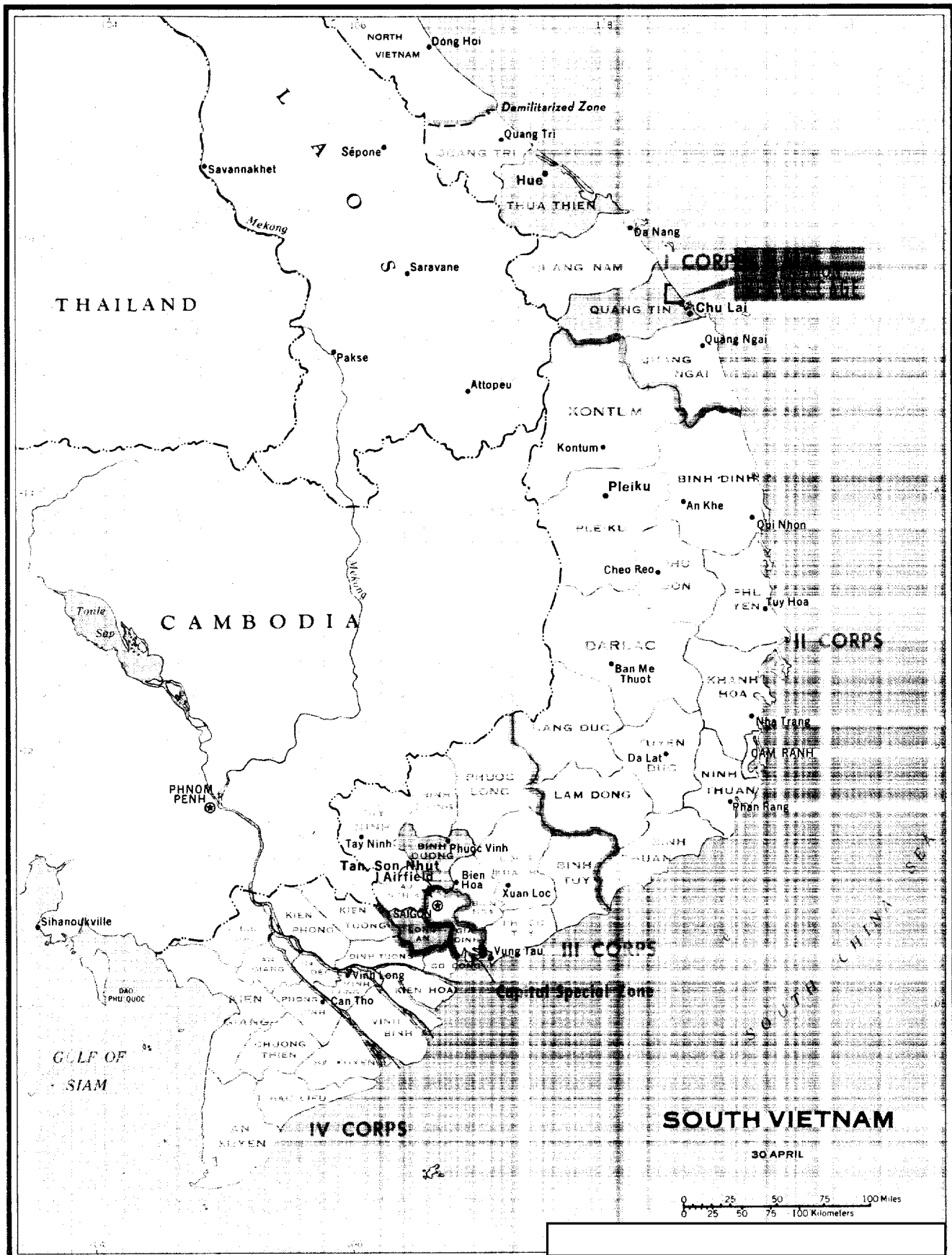
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IV. Other Communist Military Developments:  
There is nothing of significance to report.

V. Communist Political Developments: Stepped up evacuation of Haiphong reported by Czech news service (Paras. 1-2). Pravda reports that Nguyen Duy Trinh left Moscow for home about 28 April (Para. 3). Front central committee issues propaganda appeal for increased military pressure in coming months (Para. 4).

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I. THE MILITARY SITUATION IN SOUTH VIETNAM

1. No large-scale military actions were reported in South Vietnam over the weekend; however, scattered, small-unit encounters between allied and Communist forces took place throughout the country.

2. A US Marine Special Landing Force began a new Operation--codenamed BEAVER CAGE--on 28 April in coastal Quang Tin Province. The objective of this sweep operation is to clear Communist concentrations which threaten populated areas and allied military positions north of Chu Lai. Only light contact with the enemy has thus far been reported.

3. Nearly 60 Communist soldiers were killed as the result of a five-hour engagement with South Vietnamese troops about ten miles east of Hue in northern Thua Thien Province on 28 April. During the battle friendly troops were supported by artillery and tactical air strikes. South Vietnamese casualties were reported as three killed and 18 wounded.

4. Also in the Hue area, a US Marine artillery position northwest of the city was attacked on 29 April with nearly 100 rounds of mortar fire. American casualties totaled 20 wounded; enemy casualties as a result of the reaction effort are unknown.

5. Late on 30 April, a US Army brigade base camp in Binh Duong Province was struck by approximately 15 rounds of enemy mortar fire. Nine Americans were wounded and four helicopters were damaged, two severely.

Viet Cong Plans to Mortar Targets in and Near Saigon

6. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] a group of 60 Viet Cong moved through a village in Long An Province several miles southwest of Saigon on 22 April en route to attack

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Tan Son Nhut Airfield. The group reportedly disclosed that it would reconnoiter the area, using about 20 of its members disguised as ARVN soldiers or National Police, and that the attack would take place after midnight when Viet Cong sympathizers would be on guard. No mention was made of any plans to use rockets.

7. Another report states that either on 1 or 19 May--May Day and Ho Chi Minh's birthday, respectively--Viet Cong guerrillas plan to attack the New Port area of Saigon and/or a US military radio and TV station in the capital. An increase of terrorism and sabotage has on occasion marked such Communist holidays.

Enemy Plans to Attack Pleiku City

8. Several North Vietnamese Army (NVA) battalions will join with smaller Viet Cong sabotage and reconnaissance units to mount coordinated attacks against targets in and near Pleiku city

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One enemy battalion is scheduled to attack Jedap Enang, a resettlement area several miles southwest of Pleiku city, while another battalion will simultaneously strike allied installations--including the II Corps headquarters--in the city itself. With the assistance of the local force units, an attempt to free detainees presently being held in a II Corps PW camp is also planned.

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tend to confirm the presence of enemy units west of Pleiku city which reportedly have the mission of attacking allied installations. These planned attacks will probably take the form of heavy mortar attacks followed by small-scale probing actions rather than a full-scale battalion-size assault which could be effectively countered by allied reaction forces.

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## II. POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN SOUTH VIETNAM

1. The Constituent Assembly--reduced to 116 members by the resignation of one deputy who joined Premier Ky's cabinet--convened on 28 April to discuss the completed draft of the presidential election law. The session was quickly adjourned to permit the drafting committee to make changes stipulating that the law applies only to this year's and not future elections. No information is yet available on the assembly discussions which were to be resumed on the 29th.

2. As it apparently now stands, the draft law contains no mention of a minimum percentage of the total vote which a candidate must attain to win, nor of a runoff election. It thus appears to reflect the views of Premier Ky, and deputies known to support civilian presidential candidates believe it will favor a military contender. In view of earlier reports that the drafting subcommittee had tentatively agreed to incorporate a runoff provision, it seems likely that pressure from Ky's supporters on the committee influenced the final form of the draft. The law now reads that the candidate with the most votes will be declared elected.

3. Two other provisions in the draft law are worthy of note. One requires all civil servants and military personnel filing candidacies for the presidency to take "leave without pay," except for those in "popularly elected positions." This would almost certainly allow civilian candidate Pham Khoc Suu to retain his Constituent Assembly chairmanship through the campaign, and the US Embassy believes it authorizes Premier Ky or Chief of State Thieu to run while retaining office although possibly out of military uniform. The second provision sets the date of the presidential election for "a Sunday in September 1967," presumably reflecting assembly pique at the military leadership's unilateral scheduling of the election for 1 September, a Friday.

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Presidential Politics

4. A Saigon newspaper on 28 April carried an announcement of the presidential candidacy of businessman Bui Ngoc Phuong, the fifth civilian to throw his hat in the ring. Phuong, a northern-born and an alleged participant in various political alliances and publishing enterprises, has no known standing which would make him a serious challenger.

5. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] retired general Tran Van Don has made known his intention to relinquish the presidency of the "Southern Old Students Association," an organization of influential southern politicians. Don, barred from seeking the presidency himself, had been toying with the idea of backing the candidacy of Premier Ky, hoping to trade his southern support for the promise of a high government office. His resignation from the "Old Students" group is apparently a face-saving gesture to cover Don's loss of control over the organization to militant southern regionalists who support civilian candidate Tran Van Huong.

Labor Activity

6. Influential minority labor leader Bui Luong no longer intends to stage a parade in Saigon on 1 May, but will still hold an outdoor rally, according to the latest information of the US Embassy. This should reduce the chances for disorders, but does not rule out the possibility of antigovernment and anti-American overtones. Although Bui Luong had previously stated that he would permit no provocative banners or speeches, [REDACTED]

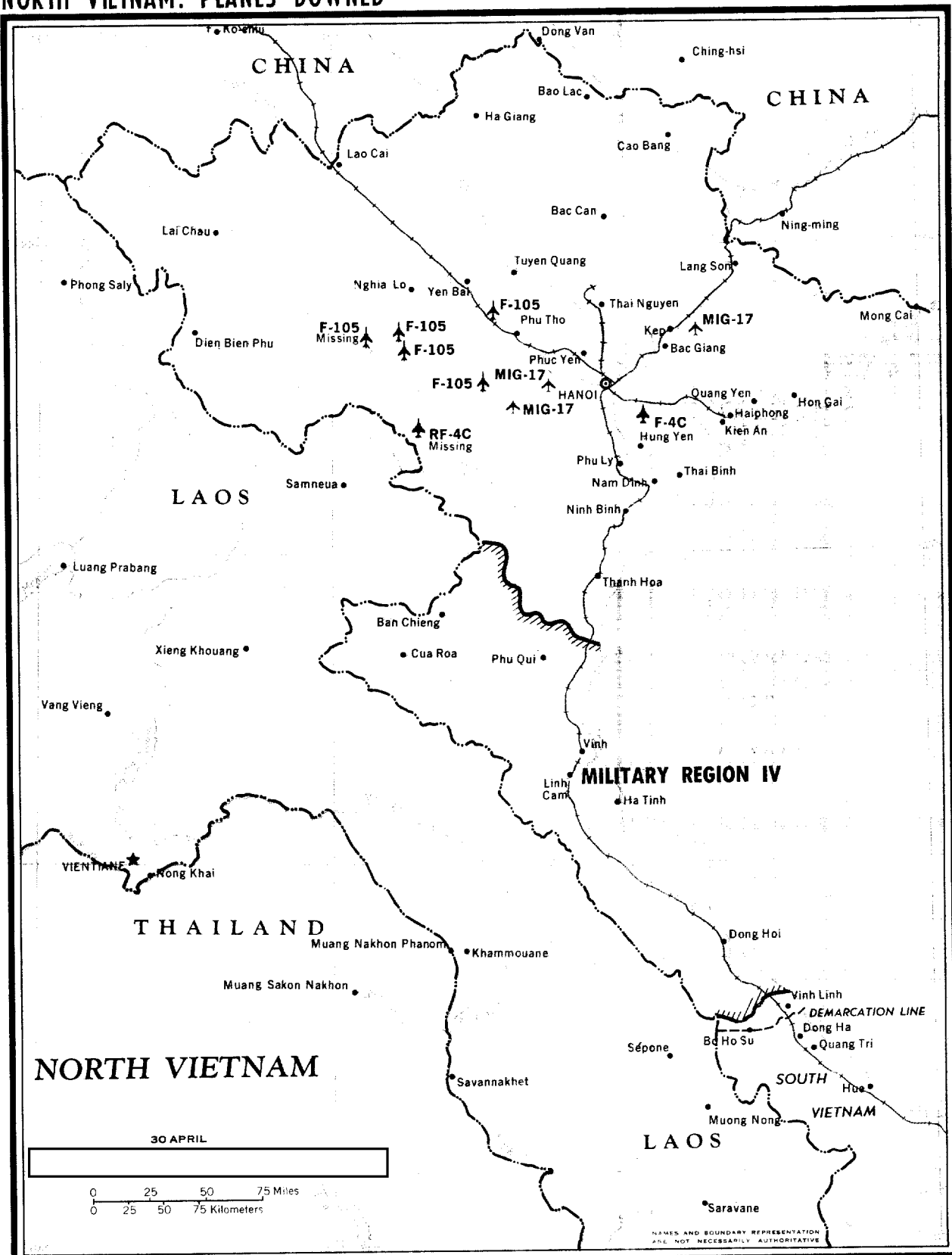
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[REDACTED] among the groups planning to participate are militant Buddhists, as well as some unions and associations with suspected Viet Cong ties. Slogans protesting the US presence and conduct of the war were reportedly being prepared for the occasion.

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## NORTH VIETNAM: PLANES DOWNED



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III. MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS IN NORTH VIETNAM

1. The Communists continued to step up defensive efforts against the recently intensified US air activity in the Hanoi/Haiphong area over the weekend. A total of seven US aircraft were lost over NVN.

2. Three US Air Force F-105s and an F4C were downed by heavy enemy ground fire, a F-105 was downed by a MIG-21, and two other aircraft, including another F-105 and an F4C, are missing and presumed downed. The flurry of Communist activity during the past several days also included more than six different encounters between MIGs and US aircraft and intensive surface-to-air missile firings. US pilots report three MIG-17s downed as a result of encounters with US aircraft.

3. During an attack against the Hanoi railroad/highway bridge four miles northeast of Hanoi on 29 April, the enemy air defense operations included multiple surface-to-air missile firings in addition to the large flights of MIGs--numbering as many as 17 at one time--and heavy antiaircraft fire. This formidable display of resistance was one of the most sophisticated and well-coordinated defense reactions to date and reflects the enemy's desire to protect the sensitive and strategic targets in the Hanoi/Haiphong area.

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IV. OTHER COMMUNIST MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS

1. There is nothing of significance to report.

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# V. COMMUNIST POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

1. Czech news services in North Vietnam reported on 28 April that the Haiphong authorities had ordered a "complete evacuation of the port." City officials have reportedly urged all "nonessential" personnel to leave, and are allowing only military personnel and those essential to the "most important branches of the economy" to remain in the city. The news report said that production in several industrial plants had already stopped and that many production facilities would be transferred outside the city.

2. Limited evacuation of Haiphong was initiated as early as 1966, but like Hanoi, the local authorities have never been able to accomplish anything like "wholesale evacuation." The new appeal for a speed-up in the evacuation of the major port city has not yet been confirmed by other sources, but it is possible that recent air raid damage to the economic facilities of the area has forced the government to take more drastic measures.

## North Vietnamese VIP Travel Notes

3. North Vietnamese politburo member and Vice Premier, Nguyen Duy Trinh, who attended the East German Communist Party Congress from 17-22 April, is reportedly on his way home. Trinh's appearances since the conclusion of the congress have not been well publicized and there was considerable speculation that he was spending some time in Moscow. His last appearance in Germany was on 25 April when he saw the East German foreign minister. On 29 April, Pravda reported that he had left Moscow for home, giving no date or means of transportation.

## Liberation Front Central Committee Presidium Meets in Late April

4. Communist propaganda efforts to inspire confidence among Viet Cong cadres about the prospects

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of a military victory in South Vietnam continued this weekend with the broadcast of an appeal by the Liberation Front's central committee presidium. The new appeal is a result of its three-day meeting from 24 to 26 April and follows the release of a whole series of military commentaries analyzing the war in the South which have been recently broadcast by both Radio Hanoi and the Liberation Front. The new appeal extolls the Viet Cong military feats of the past year, urges even greater efforts in the coming months, and appears to be part of a major propaganda effort designed to inspire determination and confidence throughout VC military rank and file.

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